

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 9, 2014

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PARK SEEKS INPUT ON FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

The National Park Service has prepared an environmental assessment on a proposal to manage second-growth forest stands in the Middle Fork of Lost Man Creek near Orick in northwestern Humboldt County, California.

Forest stands that regenerated after commercial timber harvest nearly 50 years ago in what is now Redwood National Park have been left untreated since that time. The NPS proposes to use standard silvicultural practices and techniques to initiate restoration of 1,125 acres of second-growth forests in the Middle Fork watershed. The treatments will accelerate development of forest characteristics in these stands that are more typical of late seral and old-growth redwood forests in the park.

The original redwood forests now within the boundaries of Redwood National Park were logged prior to park establishment in 1968 and park expansion in 1978. To ensure quicker forest regeneration after logging, clearcut areas were planted or reseeded

as required by forest practice laws in effect at the time of logging, with the intent to thin the replanted areas after the trees reached a certain size. Seed mixtures used in reseeded areas were generally not reflective of the original species composition or ratios of one species to another, or did not use seeds from the local area. With the creation and expansion of the park, commercial timber operations including active forest management and silvicultural thinning ceased. The lack of active forest management resulted in second-growth forest conditions considered ecologically unhealthy. Many of the second-growth forest stands that remain in Redwood National Park are primarily high-density, even-age Douglas-fir stands, with little canopy structure and no understory development. Without silvicultural treatments to manage existing conditions, these second-growth stands dominated by Douglas-fir, are expected to persist in an impaired condition for many decades or even centuries before they fully recover ecological and structural characteristics resembling those found in the pre-harvest forest of the project area or in current adjacent redwood dominated old-growth forests.

The proposal calls for applying several silvicultural prescriptions to reduce stand density and alter species composition to promote growth of remaining trees and understory vegetation, encourage development of multistoried canopy, and increase the ratio of redwood to Douglas-fir. This proposal is similar to a project completed by the park in 2011 in the South Fork of Lost Man Creek.



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The park will accept written comments on the proposal through July 11, 2014. Comments should be mailed to

Superintendent
Redwood National Park
Attn.: second growth
1111 Second Street
Crescent City, CA 95531

The environmental assessment is also available for review and comment on the project home page at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/secondgrowth>.

If you would like more information or a copy of the environmental assessment, please contact Leonel Arguello at 707-465-7780 or via e-mail at leonel_arguello@nps.gov.